

Department of Correction to Discontinue Work Camp at Federal Wildlife Area

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J. David Donahue.
Commissioner

Indianapolis, Indiana - (June 11, 2007) - The Indiana Department of Correction announced that it will be closing the Medaryville Correctional Facility by September 1, 2007, following discussions with the United States Department of Interior and the Indiana Department of Natural Resources. The Facility is located on the grounds of the Jasper-Pulaski State Fish and Wildlife Area.

On May 31, 2007, the Department of Natural Resources received a "Corrective Action Plan" from the U. S. Department of Interior regarding the facility and its relationship to the Jasper-Pulaski State Fish and Wildlife preserve. Because lands incorporated in the preserve were originally purchased with federal funds, all activities at the preserve are required to be consistent with the purpose for which it was originally purchased. The construction of the Medaryville Correctional Facility occurred after the land was purchased with federal funds, and as such, was not an appropriate use of the property. Therefore, the Department of Interior required the IDOC to either discontinue operations at the Facility, or alternatively, purchase additional adjacent property for use as a nature preserve, and restrict future operations at the facility. DNR provided the Corrective Action Plan to the Department of Correction for evaluation and response.

"After assessing the corrective action plan, it is apparent that continuing operations of this facility is not cost-effective or efficient in the long-term," said Commissioner J. David Donahue. "We are going to ensure that every employee at the facility has a comparable job opportunity in surrounding area prisons and that the transition process is seamless."

There are currently 32 employees at the facility who will be offered comparable job opportunities at the

Westville Correctional Facility, the Indiana State Prison, or the South Bend Juvenile Correctional Facility. By September 1, 2007, all of the 136 offenders currently housed at the Medaryville Correctional Facility will be transferred to other minimum-security facilities, with a focus on placement close to their home communities.

Community service projects being provided to INDOT and surrounding communities will continue to be provided by minimum security work crews from LaPorte County DOC Facilities, including the minimum security unit located at the Indiana State Prison.

"We sincerely appreciate the maintenance and improvements achieved by Department of Correction offender work crews at the Jasper-Pulaski State Fish and Wildlife Area for the past fifty years, but we will work with our Department of Correction partners to remove the correctional facility and to comply with all of our funding requirements," said DNR Director Rob Carter.

The Medaryville Correctional Facility has operated on the grounds of the wildlife preserve since 1962. This 142 bed minimum-security facility functions as a work camp which utilizes offenders in providing maintenance services to area parks, as well as roadside cleanup and maintenance services to state agencies and local communities.

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About The Department of Correction

The Department employs over 8,000 employees and houses 24,000 adult and juveniles in 32 facilities, ranging from minimum to maximum custody, prison camps, juvenile facilities and work release centers. The Department's home page on the Internet can be found at: <http://www.in.gov/indcorrection>. The Department's Re-entry Site can be found: <http://www.reentry.in.gov>.